



A

Scaffolder's story that needs to be told

All too often we witness or hear of near misses, injuries and fatalities, commonly it happens to people we know or hear about. We all think the same; it will not happen to me, it will happen to somebody else. (NOT ME.)

The reality is we are all vulnerable every minute of every day. These things that happen are usually a result of a catalogue of errors that we think are outside our control. But are they really. We all need to think about this, and consider are these things really outside our control or can we each do much more to prevent them from happening. The answer is yes we can and yes we must.

These unfortunate people that are injured or killed are sent home after they either recover in hospital or their bodies are sent home to their families to be buried. We all are sympathetic and place them in our hearts and keep them in the back of our minds after they have gone. We commonly have collections of money to support these unfortunate people and their families, which is a commendable act of charity.

What we must also do is learn from it and prevent it happening ever again, and think of what extra steps we should each take every minute of every day to prevent ourselves and others from being injured or killed.

During a recent visit to Nepal on a recruitment drive I met Mr. Kosh Bahadur Thapa, who had sat in his car patiently for two days waiting to talk to me. On the first day I was overrun with the amount of people who I had to interview and trade test. When you go on such trips it is very hectic at the start with many people who are waiting anxiously in the hope of being accepted. You don't have time to venture out and speak to individuals.

It was mentioned to me in the morning while I was very busy that there was one man who would like to talk to me. This is quite normal on a recruitment drive because many people want to get your attention individually to secure their own position in the company, so it was nothing unusual and something that you don't have time for or take too seriously.

On the second day around midday I stepped outside the trade testing area to clear my head, while I was doing this a security guard approached me and said Mr. Ricki there is one man and his wife who have been waiting since early yesterday morning to talk to you. I said to the guard, please tell him to come over to the trade testing area in 5 minutes. He replied Mr. Ricki he cannot, he wants you to see him. I thought this to be an unusual request. Nobody had explained to me of this man's condition.

The security guard escorted me over to the man's car. I was still oblivious of this man's condition. When I reached the car he was sat in the passenger seat smiling from ear to ear. I reached out my hand to greet him and had no response apart from a big smile and his greeting words to me. He said Mr. Ricki it is a real pleasure to meet you, I heard you were coming to Nepal and I wanted to talk to you. At this stage I was still unaware of his condition and said as you can see I am very busy, but you are welcome to join me in the trade testing area, and we can talk there.

His reply was like being shot in the heart. He said Mr. Ricki I cannot walk and I cannot move this is why I have come to see you. The realization of his condition was not only completely unexpected but rocked me on my feet. This was not somebody looking for a job, he wanted to tell me his story and explain his situation to me. He briefly gave me a rundown of this terrible thing that had happened to him at the age of only 22. I was saddened and my heart went out to this unfortunate man.

He wanted me to tell his story to prevent others from suffering what he has. I had a lot of people to interview and trade test and asked him if I could see him tomorrow when most of the trade testing would be under control and less people. He turned up with his wife the following day still smiling from ear to ear. I said to him why are you so happy and smiling all the time? He said it is because I have the opportunity to meet you and tell my story.

His story needs to read out to every scaffolder or any person working on scaffolding so that they fully understand the dangers and the consequences of what can go wrong and what can happen. We must all learn from this terrible accident that resulted in Mr. Kosh Bahadur Thapa being crippled from the neck down. He came to me so that I could tell his story and warn the others.

Mr. Kosh Bahadur Thapa his story.

Before he suffered this terrible accident he was an extremely handsome healthy young man. He was an all-round athlete and body builder, which can be seen in the photos attached. At the young age of 22 he was the leader of a scaffolding crew working for a scaffolding contractor in Mesaieed Qatar.

He was standing on the ground unaware that his helper an unskilled worker was handling materials above his head. The helper unintentionally dropped a 4m scaffolding board from 8m above Kosh, which struck him on the back of his neck.

He was taken to the hospital and it was diagnosed that his neck had been broken. He underwent surgery and spent 10 months in a hospital in Doha recovering enough for him to go home. Nothing could be done to reverse the damage caused to his neck. There is a large scar that partially encircles his neck as a result of the surgery that was carried out on him.

When he had recovered sufficiently enough for him to travel he was flown back to his family in Nepal. His family then took him to India to see if the doctors there could help, but unfortunately nothing could be done.

He now depends on his wife and family to do everything for him. He has very limited use of only his right hand. He was very happy to tell me that with great difficulty he is able to work on his computer with the help of a mouse.

The strength of this man's character and attitude towards life is commendable. His concern for his fellow man that nobody else should suffer the way he has cannot be put into words.

I would like to thank him and his family for approaching me and having the belief and confidence in me that I would tell his story to prevent others suffering the way he has.

Written by
Ricki Morgan
Qatar

Mr. Kosh Bahadur Thapa age 22.



Mr. Kosh Bahadur Thapa today at the age 32 and his wife Rama Thapa. 10 years after his unfortunate accident.



Mr. Kosh Bahadur Thapa and his wife and family do not want this to happen to you or your colleagues. So what can we do to prevent this from ever happening again.